

So, Harris County, you need to move faster to use the Federal funds that we now have.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF TOM PETTY

(Mr. YOHO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Gainesville's native son, Mr. Tom Petty.

Thomas Earl Petty was born on October 20, 1950, and, over a career that spanned five decades, collected 28 top 10 hits, the most of all time.

But his contribution cannot be measured in hits or awards. He wrote America's soundtrack. Tom Petty's story sounds familiar. He grew up in a small town, struggled, persisted, and then succeeded—a true American Dream story.

But it is not what he did; it is how he did it that strikes us. It is the honesty, wit, and sentimentality that made his music special. Every hit Tom Petty crafted became an anthem, each song a score to the memorable moments of our lives. American life would be much diminished without his work.

Jefferson and Madison wrote our system. Twain wrote our story that described Early American folklore. Petty wrote our songs. The songbook of America is bigger and brighter because of him.

Rest in peace as you continue "Runnin' Down a Dream."

#### REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, we are here today because, almost 11 months ago, the American people voted to give Republicans control of unified government. They were tired of being crushed by rising healthcare costs due to ObamaCare. They wanted America's economy to prosper again. They wanted a secure border.

During the months that followed, Congress worked with President Trump to sign over 50 bills into law. On top of that, the House passed over 270 laws that now sit in the Senate awaiting action.

Despite this legislation, there is a unified voice that is loud and clear arriving daily from our base, saying, "Get something done." The reason for that call is because Americans continue to be crushed by government policies, something that is very evident. These are the same policies that drove them to vote for us in the first place.

Americans are scarred by the broken promises of the former administration. They could not keep their doctor, even

though they were told by the former President they could. Their premiums did not go down \$2,500, and their exchanges did not work.

ObamaCare resulted in fewer options and increased costs for many Americans. Out-of-pocket costs continue to soar, with overage deductibles for bronze plans topping \$6,000 in 2017.

Some States, like Arizona, faced premium increases of 116 percent; Oklahoma, 69 percent. Tennessee faced a 63 percent increase. And one-third of counties have only one insurer offering coverage on the exchange. Some entire States like Wyoming, right below me, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Alaska only have one insurer.

Think about that. This trend is predicted to worsen, with half of American counties only having one insurer in 2018.

As we have come to almost 8 years with the ACA, or ObamaCare, we run a risk of thinking that it is normal. Our healthcare system was not perfect before. We are not making that case. But ObamaCare made what was already bad even worse.

We cannot think of these stats as mere numbers. Americans are really suffering under this law. Just because Senate Majority Leader MCCONNELL gave up on repealing ObamaCare in the Senate does not mean Americans will give Congress and Republicans a pass. We cannot and we must not give up on this important promise.

The burden of ObamaCare is only made worse by the lackluster growth of the economy in recent years. During the Obama administration years, the economy failed to grow even once at the historic goal of 3 percent a year, something we just saw in our last quarter.

Americans are as industrious and innovative as ever. Americans' work ethic is not the problem. It is our antiquated tax system that has been bogged down over the years by regulators and lobbyists.

Since our last major rewrite of the Tax Code 31 years ago, the same year that "Top Gun" was number one in the box office, 1986, our Tax Code has added over 35,000 pages. Think about that—35,000 pages. That is about three changes per day. Each page is another carve-out or a loophole for the well connected, leaving the rest of the economy behind.

Our companies are at a disadvantage internationally, as our tax rate stands at 35 percent, the highest, as we know now, in the industrialized world.

Families continue to be punished with a marriage penalty.

Our Tax Code should be a competitive advantage for our companies competing with the world. It should encourage innovators to push the boundaries and find success.

The call to get something done that we hear loud and clear from Americans is also coupled with a call to make sure that we are doing our very best to secure the border. Perhaps there is no

more vocal call from the past year than to build that wall.

In 2016, the United States saw a surge in illegal border crossings, with 46,000 illegals apprehended in that October alone. This is both a fiscal and a security issue.

Border security is more than just the border, though. Visa overstays are responsible for up to 40 percent of illegal immigration. We need a solution, and we need an action to this problem if we are truly to secure the border.

To add to these problems, more than 100 sanctuary jurisdictions have enacted policies which restrict cooperation with ICE, allowing potentially dangerous illegal immigrant criminals to remain in our country.

I am confident that the American people will deliver their final grade on Republicans over the next 3 months simply based on the three issues, the three promises that I am speaking about today: number one, continuing to work and replace and repeal ObamaCare; number two, reforming the Tax Code; and, number three, securing the border. In short, repeal, reform, secure; repeal, reform, secure. We need to fulfill these promises in the next 3 months. The urgency and the time is now.

As I said before, the status quo on these policies is literally crushing Americans, and this is why they elected Republicans. In fact, since 1913, when Republicans expanded, or when the House expanded the 387 Members to 435, this is the only time in history when back-to-back Congresses, the Americans have elected 240 or more Republicans, and it is time we did our job. We need to keep our promises to the American people.

I am pleased to be joined by members of the Republican Study Committee today to talk about the importance of keeping these promises. That is why it is my privilege to introduce one of our newer members from Kansas, Representative RON ESTES.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. ESTES).

Mr. ESTES of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, after a decade of inadequate economic growth across America, there is new growing optimism that our economy is about to be set free again. Consumer confidence in the economy is the highest it has been since 2000. Why? I believe this is because the American people expect us to reform our broken Tax Code, and they are excited about it.

Our outdated and overly complex Tax Code has held our economy down for the past decade. It is time we fix this and empower working families in America.

Real tax reform will be the best way to help America climb up the economic ladder. A stronger economy will bring higher wages and better jobs. The goal is to make our Federal Code simple and to make it fair.

□ 1730

The Tax Code, as it is, only benefits the rich and well-connected who can